

And it is unclear that this control board will step up on behalf of the Puerto Rican people and make creating jobs, creating more jobs and creating more jobs the number one priority of the junta. That is the way we create a tax base for Puerto Rico. That is the way we give puertorriquenos a viable option to live and work in Puerto Rico rather than moving to Florida or some other State.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we leave Washington this week and head home for the great exercise in American democracy in November, I want all of us to keep in mind that the island of Puerto Rico, our colony in the Caribbean Sea, is a place that now, more than ever, only dreams of true democracy.

#### COMMENDING EDEN DETENTION CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with concerns about a recently issued memo from the Department of Justice to the Acting Director of the Bureau of Prisons directing the non-renewal or reduction of contracts with private detention facilities. I strongly disagree with this policy change, as private prisons play a critical role in our current Federal Bureau of Prisons system.

One facility in particular, the Eden Detention Center, located in Texas' 11th District, is an excellent example of a private prison operating in an efficient, effective, secure, and safe manner for both the community and those incarcerated.

Let me take a moment to brag about these constituents.

The American Correctional Association has awarded the Eden Detention facility a 100 percent score on their mandatory requirements, and a 99.08 percent score on nonmandatory requirements. These are undoubtedly phenomenal rankings by any measure, and the Eden facility meets these high standards at considerably lower costs than similar Federal facilities.

Eden is more than a detention facility; it is a rehabilitation center. The Bureau of Prisons has long placed significance on rehabilitating those incarcerated, directing facilities to invest in the lives of their inmates. The goal—to turn individuals from a life of crime to contributing members of society—is at the center of the Eden facility's mission.

It is this responsibility for one's fellow man that the people of Eden understand and put into practice daily, providing inmates with extensive training, educational services, and recreation, all for the purpose of improving life after incarceration.

The Eden facility has partnered with many civic and charitable organizations in the surrounding community to support this goal. As a result, the center is able to provide many vocational,

computer, and life skills training opportunities, as well as educational opportunities for basic adult education, English language training, GED, a full library, a law library, and much more.

The Bureau of Prisons takes extreme pride—and rightfully so—in a strong value system that includes, but is not limited to, respect, integrity, service, safety for all parties, successful rehabilitation, and exceptional staff and operations. I am proud to report that Eden and the greater community not only meet these core values, but they share them as well.

#### GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, Americans everywhere are tired of reading headlines about mass shootings. What happened in Orlando in June broke all our hearts, and we have felt similar outrage about the shooting in Houston this week. But while incidents like this command headlines, we forget just how frequent shootings have become.

In New York City, already this year, there have been 897 shooting victims. According to Gun Violence Archive, which tracks shootings daily across the United States, there have been 10,717 gun-related deaths this year and more than 22,000 injuries, and it is only September.

There are steps this Congress could take to help stem this violence. Will any one solution stop gun violence completely? Of course not. There are anywhere from 270 million to 310 million guns in the United States, close to one firearm for every man, woman and child. So we will not solve this problem overnight. But there are some steps we could take, steps that Republicans continue blocking.

First, it makes no sense that if you cannot legally get on an airplane, you can still purchase a firearm. If you are prohibited from flying, you shouldn't be buying a gun. That is just common sense.

Now, some on the other side of the aisle like to drag up an incident or two where someone was incorrectly placed on the no-fly list. If that is the case, I will say, let's also fix the no-fly list. But we cannot use this as an excuse to do nothing. That is what the NRA and the gun manufacturing lobby want Congress to do—nothing.

Second, for 10 years, this Nation used to have an assault weapon ban. President Bush let that law expire. We need to reinstate it.

Third, we need a universal system of background checks, something that 87 percent of the American public supports.

Mr. Speaker, there are other, tougher steps I would like to see implemented. I have legislation that will invest in community organizations that combat

gun violence. My bill will also help stop the flow of stolen guns into New York City and hold accountable gun owners who lose their guns and irresponsibly do not report them missing.

For now, there are three basic steps we should take immediately to help reduce this epidemic. Yet Republicans can barely fund the government, let alone take on difficult problems like these.

Let me make one last observation, Mr. Speaker. The American people are watching on this issue. If Republicans are in such a hurry to get back to your districts, I promise, you will hear from your constituents on this issue.

We are all tired of tragedies like Orlando and what happened in Houston this week, and we are also outraged by the daily shootings that do not make national news but still shatter families.

The American people are watching. They are telling the Republican leadership: "Do your job. Do your job with funding to address Zika. Do your job with money for Flint. And do your job to address the tragedy of gun violence."

#### ICANN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, it was recently revealed that 500 million Yahoo email accounts were hacked in 2014, making it the largest data breach in U.S. history. Even more troubling is the fact that the perpetrators have been reported to be state-sponsored actors, with China and Russia among the likely suspects.

Yet, in the face of such vulnerabilities, President Obama wants to give the Chinese and Russian Governments more control over how the Internet operates. The President has even promised to shut down the Federal Government budget so that he can meet his goal of giving away a portion of America's control over the Internet to these foreign governments by October 1, 2016.

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Rushing headlong to meet an arbitrary date to hand over our Internet control is incredibly foolish. In fact, it is stupid. No one rewards a criminal for their criminal acts, but that is exactly what the President's policy does.

Sadly, it is yet another example of how this administration has sacrificed U.S. leadership and values across the world to advance a reckless agenda. The policies from this administration have only led to America losing standing and influence across the globe on a wide range of fronts—and it must end.

Our adversaries have become bolder, taking advantage of the vacuum of leadership created by the pulling back of U.S. leadership. The forces of extremism, violence, totalitarianism, and criminal enterprises have filled the void, and the American people are suffering as a result.

The disastrous nuclear deal with Iran is a very good example. It has not only failed to curtail the Iranian regime's plans to develop nuclear weapons, it has also resulted in a ransom payment of \$1.7 billion for four Americans who were being held illegally by Iran.

This display of weakness has only emboldened the largest state sponsor of international terrorism. It has provided Iran with over \$1 billion to fund terrorism, enhance its illegal ballistic missile development programs, and ramp up its aggression against U.S. military forces.

President Reagan warned us: "Weakness, after all, is a temptation—it tempts the pugnacious to assert themselves—but strength is a declaration that cannot be misunderstood. Strength is a condition that declares actions have consequences. Strength is a prudent warning to the belligerent that aggression need not go unanswered."

Whenever this administration pulls back, the belligerent have happily stepped in to fill the void. That is why we must reject this latest effort to relinquish U.S. leadership over the Internet.

The excessive hacking encouraged by the Governments of Russia, China, and others should not be rewarded. We must stand up to these dangerous actors and put the safety, security, and interests of the United States first. Simply put, Russia and China cannot be trusted with a larger role in the operation of the Internet. We have a duty to block the President's foolish and reckless Internet giveaway before it goes into effect October 1, 2016.

It will further cede more control to our adversaries and weaken America's influence on the international stage. Stopping this giveaway must be included in this year's spending bill. It is absolutely critical that Congress takes action.

#### SAN JACINTO RIVER WASTE PITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker and Members, I rise to announce that later today the Environmental Protection Agency will issue its final plan to clean up the San Jacinto River Waste Pits, a Superfund site in eastern Harris County, Texas.

The communities of eastern Harris County, especially Channelview and Highlands, have fought for a decade to ensure that toxic waste that was dumped alongside the San Jacinto River 50 years ago will be fully removed and permanently protect our children and our children's children from the dangers found at the site.

I thank the EPA and Region 6 for its hard work and diligence on this very important issue for our community. I would also like to thank the community members and local officials who have fought to clean up the site and ensure our community is made whole.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to EPA's announcement today.

#### THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my constituents to express my outrage about the White House's ransom payment to Iran.

On January 17, 2016, the Obama administration announced that it would give the Islamic Republic of Iran a total of \$1.7 billion to settle a 1979 arms deal. However, they failed to announce that, the day before, the administration had delivered an advance payment in cash of \$400 million in unmarked bills to Iran in exchange for four American hostages. In fact, the American people did not learn that the White House had made this secret ransom payment at all until this past August.

The Obama administration's decision to violate our Nation's own historic policy against ransom payments has established a frightening precedent for the future. The President's willingness to bend to Iran's demands and use unmarked bills demonstrates to the world a fundamental weakness that emboldens our enemies while ceding to the demands of state sponsors of terrorism.

American soldiers, diplomats, and citizens living and traveling abroad are less safe this year than they were last year. And global beliefs and perceptions of American leadership and intentions—among our allies and, more disastrously, among the bad actors in the world—have been forever altered.

Indeed, Iran is already celebrating its leverage over the United States. One commander of an Iranian Revolutionary Guard militia exulted that "taking this much money back was in return for the release of the American spies."

Since the January ransom payment, Iran has, unsurprisingly, arrested additional Americans. The American people deserve answers about why the President felt it was acceptable to give nearly \$2 billion to radical extremists supporting terrorism across the Middle East and beyond.

That is why this month I interrogated officials at a Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing. My colleagues and I questioned the timing of the secret payment, the White House's insidious and foolish decision to use unmarked bills, and implications on terrorism in the region. But the administration refused to answer my simple questions that would give Americans the answers they deserve. Instead, officials said they could only share information behind closed doors.

I took them up on that offer, and I and my colleagues had that 2-hour-long, closed-door, classified meeting. After that briefing, I am now more certain than ever, Mr. Speaker, that the

Obama administration paid an irresponsible and dangerous ransom to Iran. Why is the Obama administration so desperate to cover up the details of its ransom payment from the American people?

The White House has made a reckless national security decision to bend entirely to the demands of Iran without assurances that Iran would not use this money for its military.

Keep in mind that the Iranian military blatantly funds Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations. Shockingly, the administration told me publicly that, even if they had received assurances from Iran, they wouldn't have trusted the country to keep its promises.

Why, then, would we have given \$400 million in unmarked bills to the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism? Why would the Obama administration accommodate and fund a foreign military that funds terrorism around the world?

Why didn't the White House write legally binding restrictions on the use of the money into the settlement agreement? Why did we agree to the settlement with a state sponsor of terrorism in the first place?

The entire \$1.7 billion was reportedly transferred to the Iranian military to fund a 90 percent increase in Iran's military budget. This is public information, and the Obama administration dismissively pretends that no one can use the Internet.

The Obama administration's gift to the Iranian military is a disgrace to America's allies in the Middle East, especially to Israel. It is a degradation of America's counterterrorism efforts and geopolitical leadership. It is a failure to protect Americans abroad and the new prisoners who have been detained in Iran.

As a member of this free Nation's assembly of the people, I will hold our President accountable for his deception and negligence and will work to reverse this dangerous precedent that this administration has made for the future of our country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded not to engage in personalities toward the President.

#### MACADAMIA TREE HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, when most people think of Hawaii, my home State, they immediately think of our beautiful beaches, mountains, vistas, and wonderful people and culture, and they dream about when they might come and visit our home State. This contributes, no doubt, to our tourism industry being the major driver of our economy in Hawaii.

But, along with our beautiful year-round climate comes a great opportunity for our agriculture industry. In fact, most people are not aware that